

Letter from Thomas A. Watson to Alexander Graham Bell, July 1, 1903

FORE RIVER SHIP AND ENGINE COMPANY, SHIP BUILDERS, QUINCY,
MASSACHUSETTS. July 1st, 1903. Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, Baddeck, Nova Scotia.
My dear Sir:—

I have your letter of June 26th regarding Herman A. Perkins. I hardly think that our works would be a good place for him to learn the boat building trade. Our work is of the heaviest description and is entirely in steel, building as we do the largest battleships and other steam-boats.

The great size of the ships we build and the weight of material we handle introduce an element of danger in the operations of our workmen which would be greatly increased in the case of a deaf person.

I think if Miss Fuller should look through our works she would agree with me that it is no place for any of her students.

It is possible that he might learn the trade of a pattern maker. I would be glad to talk with her about that and will give the boy a position in that department if there is a vacancy.

I am the same man that worked with you in Salem, at 109 Court Street, and Exeter Place, Boston.

I have followed your kite experiments with a great deal of interest. It seems to me that your perceptions of the underlying principles of flight are as clear as they were on the subject of the electrical transmission of sound and I believe your tetrahedral kite will play a most important part in the flying machine of the future.

Library of Congress

The Fore River Ship and Engine Company has the second largest steel shipbuilding plant in this country, giving employment to about four 2 thousand men. It has been an enterprise of mine from the start. It has grown from an extremely small affair employing a dozen men to its present size. We have under construction ten steam and sailing vessels, five of which are the largest that have ever been built in the world.

I send herewith photographs of some of our products.

It would give me great pleasure to show you through our works sometime when you are in Boston. I think you would find many things of interest here, especially in the very large use we make of electricity in the transmission of power.

With kindest regards to you and Mrs. Bell, I remain,

Very truly yours, Thomas A Watson M 10733-03 Enclosures